

Message Text

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PACIFIC SALMON ENHANCEMENT PLAN IS BEING EDITED AND PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION IN VANCOUVER AND WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS. EMBASSY WILL POUCH COPIES OF PLAN TO STATE (OES/OFA/FA) AND COMMERCE (NMFS) WHEN RELEASED. FOLLOWING MAY 30 GOC PRESS RELEASE IS ONLY AVAILABLE PUBLIC DOCUMENT PROVIDING DETAILS OF THE PLAN:

QUOTE: VANCOUVER - THE FEDERAL CABINET HAS GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD FOR A MASSIVE SALMONID DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, AIMED AT MORE THAN DOUBLING THE ANNUAL PRODUCTION OF CANADA'S PACIFIC SALMON.

MAKING THE ANNOUNCEMENT HERE TODAY, FISHERIES MINISTER ROMEO LEBLANC SAID THE FIRST FIVE-YEAR PHASE OF THE PROGRAM WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY \$150 MILLION. THE SECOND PHASE OF THE PROGRAM, EXTENDING FROM THE SIXTH TO THE FIFTEENTH YEAR, COULD SEE AN ANNUAL INVESTMENT IN ENHANCEMENT RANGING FROM \$30 TO \$60 MILLION, MR. LEBLANC STATED.

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SINCE THE CONCEPT OF THE SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM WAS FIRST ANNOUNCED IN MARCH, 1975, THE FISHERIES AND MARINE SERVICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT, IN COOPERATION WITH B.C. PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS, HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN DETAILED PLANNING OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WHICH WILL SPREAD ALONG THE ENTIRE BRITISH COLUMBIA

COASTLINE AND TO SPAWNING AND REARING WATERS IN THE INTERIOR OF THE PROVINCE.

BY APPLYING A CAREFULLY SELECTED MIX OF PROVEN ENHANCEMENT TECHNIQUES, RANGING FROM THE REHABILITATION OF IMPAIRED NATURAL HABITATS TO SUCH MAN-MADE AIDS AS ARTIFICIAL SPAWNING CHANNELS, HATCHERIES AND FISHWAYS, THE FISHERIES EXPERTS EXPECT TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS OF EXPANDING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DOUBLING TO \$400 MILLION THE VALUE OF THE ANNUAL COMMERCIAL SALMON PRODUCTION IN THE 1990'S.

MR. LEBLANC SAID THE GOVERNMENT PLANNED TO HAVE MECHANISMS IN PLACE TO BEGIN RECOVERY OF ITS INVESTMENT COSTS IN THE PROGRAM BY THE SPRING OF 1978. IN THIS REGARD, CONSULTATIONS WOULD BEGIN IMMEDIATELY WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERIES.

PARTICIPATION BY CONSERVATION GROUPS, SERVICE CLUBS, SCHOOLS AND INDIVIDUALS IN PROJECTS SUCH AS STREAM CLEARING AND LOCAL WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES, WILL BE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE OVERALL PROGRAM AND COULD BE A KEY FACTOR IN RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUNDREDS OF SMALL STREAMS ON WHICH SUCH SALMON AND TROUT PRODUCTION DEPENDS.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA CLEARED THE WAY FOR COOPERATION IN THE PREPARATION OF COORDINATED ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM PROPOSALS BY UNCLASSIFIED

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SIGNING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING IN DECEMBER 1975. ENHANCEMENT MEASURES WILL BE APPLIED TO SPORTFISH OTHER THAN SALMON, PARTICULARLY STEELHEAD AND CUTTHROAT TROUT, WHICH THE PROVINCE ADMINISTERS UNDER A LONGSTANDING ARRANGEMENT WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

THE PRESENT-DAY PACIFIC SALMON RESOURCE HAS DECLINED TO APPROXIMATELY HALF OF ITS HISTORIC LEVEL, LARGELY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN ENCROACHMENT ON THE AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT. ALTHOUGH SALMON POPULATION LEVELS HAVE STABILIZED SINCE THE MID-1950'S AS A RESULT OF THE APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT, INCREASED HABITAT PROTECTION, AND SOME ARTIFICIALLY ENHANCED PRODUCTION, NATURAL STOCKS ARE STILL DECLINING AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF A WELL-PLANNED COMPREHENSIVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM OF THE TYPE NOW BEING LAUNCHED.

THE SALMON RESOURCE, BASE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FOURTH

MOST VALUABLE PRIMARY INDUSTRY, SUPPORTS 14,000 JOBS, A LARGE NUMBER OF PROCESSING PLANTS AND A FLEET OF 5,000 VESSELS IN THE COMMERCIAL INDUSTRY. SALMON ARE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF FOOD AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE NATIVE INDIAN PEOPLE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THEIR TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE. SALMON AND SEA-RUN TROUT ALSO PROVIDE MILLIONS OF HOURS OF RECREATION TO A QUARTER MILLION SPORT FISHERMEN, AND ARE THE CORE OF A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR RECREATIONAL FISHING INDUSTRY.

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STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT THE B.C. COMMERCIAL SALMON INDUSTRY HAS THE CAPACITY TO CATCH AND PROCESS THE BULK OF THE PROJECTED INCREASED PRODUCTION WITHOUT ADDING SIGNIFICANT NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENTS. MR. LEBLANC NOTED THAT THE ECONOMIC GAINS CREATED BY THIS BOOST IN PRODUCTION COULD WELL BE LOST IF THERE WERE AN UNNECESSARY EXPANSION OF PROCESSING PLANTS FOR THE ADDITION OF NEW VESSELS.

SOME OF THE FIRST YEAR PROJECTS THAT WILL BE SET IN MOTION BY APPROVAL OF THE FIRST PHASE OF THE SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- CONSTRUCTION OF REARING PONDS FOR JUVENILE SALMON AND STEELHEAD TROUT AT INCHES CREEK IN THE FRASER VALLEY, AT DEADMAN'S CREEK ON THE THOMPSON RIVER SYSTEM IN THE INTERIOR, AND AT PUNTLEDGE AND BIG QUALICUM RIVERS ON VANCOUVER ISLAND.

- COMPLETION OF DESIGN WORK FOR A KITIMAT RIVER HATCHERY AND OF SURVEYS AND DESIGNS FOR FISHWAYS AT LOWE INLET ON THE NORTH COAST AND KAKWEIKAN RIVER ON THE SOUTH COAST.

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- LAKE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS, IN WHICH ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS ARE ADDED TO THE WATER TO STIMULATE GROWTH OF THE FOOD FOR YOUNG SOCKEYE, TO BE CONDUCTED IN GREAT CENTRAL, KENNEDY, HENDERSON AND HOBITON LAKES ON VANCOUVER ISLAND AND IN LONG LAKE ON THE MAINLAND CENTRAL COAST AREA.

- DESIGN OF ARTIFICIAL SPAWNING CHANNELS FOR LITTLE QUALICUM RIVER ON VANCOUVER ISLAND, AND MATHERS CREEK ON THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS.

- CONSTRUCTION OF INCUBATION BOXES FOR PALLANT CREEK ON THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS AND DESIGN OF SIMILAR FACILITIES FOR WOLF LAKE AND TLUPANA RIVER ON VANCOUVER ISLAND.

COSTS OF THESE FIRST YEAR PROJECTS, INCLUDING ENGINEERING FEASIBILITY AND DESIGN STUDIES AND BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS, WILL AMOUNT TO APPROXIMATELY \$9 MILLION IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR.

TO ENSURE THAT THE WIDEST BENEFITS WILL ACCRUE FROM THE ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS, AN ON-GOING REVIEW OF THE PROGRAM WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENTS OF MANPOWER AND IMMIGRATION, INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION AND OTHER FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED.

'THIS INVESTMENT BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL BRING SIGNIFICANT, LASTING RETURNS IN TERMS OF JOBS, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS, AND THE CREATION OF NEW WEALTH FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CANADA,' THE MINISTER SAID. UNQUOTE. ENDERS

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